

honourable mention. The orgy of brutality, by which the independent spirit of the peasants was crushed, is an indelible disgrace to German civilisation in the sixteenth century. In this respect civilisation falls back into pure savagery. The outburst of peasant passion, which after all exhausted itself against the property, not the person, of the oppressor, was meekness itself compared with the fiendish cruelty of many of their victorious masters. In Tyrol, where the resistance was longer, this savagery sated itself with impaling, flaying, quartering prisoners ; in other regions it contented itself with hanging, decapitation, chopping off fingers, gouging out eyes, massacres, with an occasional *auto-da-fe* by way of variety. Truchsess⁵ hangman, Berthold Aichlin, became the terror of the Suabian Boers, and the number of the executions in the territory of the Suabian League is reckoned as high as ten thousand. Of the doings of Margrave Casimir in Anspach-Baireuth and the bishopric of Wiirzburg, many a horrible tale is told. This cut-throat, who had at first coquetted with the Franconian insurgents in the hope of turning the bishopric into a Franconian duchy for himself, "massacred/⁵ says Lorenz Fries, "men, women, and children." "On the 9th June he caused fifty-eight burghers of Kitzingen to have their eyes publicly gouged out by the hangman, amid the wailing and lamentations of women and children." "And they wandered about afterwards in the country," adds the scribe, "presenting a melancholy spectacle, holding each other by the hands, and begging as they went." "The Margrave," writes another, "has all the captains of the rebel army beheaded; he has them stabbed, robbed of their goods and chattels, and burnt to death. He has burned down numbers of villages, and is still going on with his incendiary work and his terrible punishments. Whenever he comes across one of the insurgents he has his head chopped off, or his fingers." For other outrages the margrave could adduce the commission of Truchsess, which empowered him to proceed against the town and district of Rotenburg "with slaughter, seizures, incendiarism, and plunder." The following brief mention of the doings of the Duke of Lorraine at Zabern and elsewhere speaks for itself. "The duke has slain about 20,000 peasants,³⁷ reports the Chancellor von Eck with satisfaction, "and the